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SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2009

US Embassy Ankara Media Reaction  
Prepared by Public Affairs Information Office on a daily basis

#### Media Highlights:

How the US is Playing  
US-Turkey-Iraq Trilateral  
Islamist-oriented Zaman reports in "Three Countries Call from Baghdad: PKK Will Definitely Be Dissolved," that "the trilateral mechanism which started in Baghdad in November 2008 by senior Iraqi, Turkish and US officials to combat the PKK, held a meeting in Baghdad. The meeting focused on elimination of the PKK presence and the evacuation of the Makhmur Camp. Turkish Interior Minister Besir Atalay announced that new and concrete decisions were taken and a roadmap was outlined for dealing with the PKK issue. Mainstream Hurriyet reports, "Following the second leg of the trilateral meeting in Erbil today, Atalay will meet the Kurdish leader Barzani." Turkish TV also quote Iraqi State Minister Waili confirming that "evacuation of Makhmur camp" has been the emphasis of all discussions.

Missile Shield: US Asks Turkey to Become a Radar Center (Hurriyet)  
Hurriyet writer Metehan Demir today reports in a "behind the scenes" story that "Undersecretary Ellen Tauscher offered Turkey to become a radar center for the Missile Shield program during her visit last November." Tauscher reportedly told officials in Ankara "Turkey can be a host for radar and missiles can be stationed in the neighborhood. In this case, any "first threat" warnings would come through Turkey." The writer adds, however, that the process deadlocked when Turkey raised questions regarding locations and number of radar sites and expressed concern about Iran and Russia's perceptions.

Jeffrey Calls DTP  
In a flashy "First Call from Jeffrey," headline story, Sunday's mainstream Aksam says, "The US is pleased with the decision of DTP officials not to resign. Ambassador Jeffrey called DTP leader Ahmet Turk congratulating him for his party's positive decision."

Copenhagen: The Worst Agreement in History: Leading Turkish Sunday newspapers labeled the Copenhagen climate conference a failure of

world leaders to cut carbon emissions, provide financial aid to poor nations, determine temperature caps for the environment, and for not establishing global climate change government. Mainstream Vatan (12/20) carried the front page headline, "The Worst Agreement," and described the meeting as "a historic climate summit, for the extent of its failure." In "They Pollute and Then They Leave," mainstream Milliyet (12/20) blamed "the rich nations for being the world's biggest polluters" and "poor countries are furious over the nonbinding deal." Mainstream Hurriyet (12/20) headline read "Is The Summit A Victory or A Fiasco?," noting "while Obama and the world leaders declared victory, developing countries harshly criticized the nonbinding agreement." In "Obama is Very Happy," liberal Radikal highlights "although environmentalists called the summit a 'fiasco,' President Obama called the climate change agreement an 'important breakthrough.'"

Foreign Policy on Erdogan's Performance. US-based Foreign Policy magazine has named Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan as "Rookie of the Year," noting that Erdogan has "turned his country into a diplomatic powerhouse after decades of regional marginality."

#### In the Headlines

Crucifixion Stirs Debate: "Crisis Over Me Stavronis" (Milliyet) Turkish press gave extensive coverage to Greek Patriarch Bartholomew CBS "60 Minutes" interview, focusing on the "I feel crucified" and "like a second class citizen" remarks. FM Davutoglu called Bartholomew's remarks "unfortunate" adding that he hoped the comments were "a slip of tongue." Media played up PM Arinc's

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comments that the Patriarch's statement was "humiliating" and opposition CHP's Onur Oymen call that the remarks were "improper and unnecessary." NTV quotes a lawyer for the Patriarch that "a statement will later be issued to clarify Patriarch's remarks." Meanwhile a story in Milliyet notes that "you crucified me" or "me stavronis" is a typical expression in Greek society and quotes an official from the Patriarchate who says the expression was not against the government. In mainstream Hurriyet, Mehmet Yilmaz has advice to those criticizing the Patriarch, "don't get upset just face with mirror" and notes there is a solid basis for minorities to feel like second-class citizens and that "Turkey should deal with the problem rather than just reacting." Mainstream, pro-government HaberTurk's Yigit Bulut has a different approach: "Bartholomew is giving the wrong information. The closure of Halki seminary was a result of Patriarch's insistence on disobeying Turkish laws and claims to treat the seminary with ecumenical status." Similarly liberal Radikal's Akif Beki finds the CBS interview as "threatening" and concludes: "by making such statements, the Patriarchate cannot gain anything positive for his cause."

#### Turkey-Armenia Normalization

Armenian PM: Karabakh Insistence Will Bring Genocide Precondition (Hurriyet)

Turkish media gave prominent play to remarks by Armenian leaders over the weekend that indicated their continuing uneasiness about Turkey's linking the Karabakh issue with the normalization protocols. In an interview with mainstream daily Hurriyet, Armenian PM Tigran Sarkisian said if the Turkish parliament puts Karabakh as a condition then Armenia will do the same thing on genocide -- bringing "the ongoing process to an end." Tigran also noted that "during his visit to Washington, PM Erdogan acknowledged that protocols have no Karabakh precondition. Despite this fact, if Turkey imposes preconditions on protocol ratification, then Armenia will be doing the same." Similarly, Armenian Foreign Minister Nalbandian talked to mainstream Aksam and accused Ankara for "delaying the process." Nalbandian was quoted as saying, "this process started as well as was signed with no preconditions. If Turkey genuinely wants a solution in Karabakh, better not to interfere. Protocols were sent to parliament but it seems that the Turkish parliament is sleeping on it." Aksam reports that Armenia will wait until March 2010 to see if Turkey ratifies without any conditions and if it doesn't happen, "it will withdraw from the process completely." In mainstream Hurriyet, Cuneyt Ulsever has a different approach: "When signing the protocols, Armenian FM knew

very well that Turkish parliament will never ratify it without seeing a settlement in Karabakh." From now on, the writer foresees only diplomatic tricks from Armenia: "it is possible that Armenia deliberately will take no action on Karabakh settlement and wait for April 24 in order to force Obama to publicly recognize genocide." Mainstream Milliyet's Kadri Gursel, however, contends that the "Turkish government made a series of mistakes in this process by creating a link between normalization and Karabakh." Noting that Armenian officials have begun talking loudly about Yerevan's uneasiness, Gursel opines that the US Congress passing a genocide resolution in 2010 is likely.

Ergenekon Twist: Media continue extensive coverage today of the weekend death of Lt. Col. Ali Tatar, who allegedly committed suicide upon being recalled to face Ergenekon investigators. Mainstream Sabah headlined "Tatar Dies Together with His Secrets" while liberal Radikal characterizes the news as a "suspicious development." Turkish TV channels played scenes from the funeral and showcased family members who charged "witch hunt."

#### TV Spotlight

- Trilateral meeting continues today in Erbil and Minister Atalay talks about concrete steps to eliminate PKK's presence for good.
- 3 Parliament Members from former DTP will visit Makhmur Camp in

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#### Iraq.

- Taraf newspaper hosted a meeting between former DTP members and a group of opinion makers. The meeting was characterized as "brain storm" for dealing with the Kurdish issue.

SILLIMAN